The Application Privacy, Protection, and Security (APPS) Act of 2013

The APPS Act protects consumers' privacy on mobile devices by requiring that app developers:

- provide notice and transparency through privacy policies;
- obtain consent before collecting data; and
- protect the security of data

WHY: Smart phones and apps have tremendous benefits that enrich consumers and society. The mobile economy is also one of the fastest growing industries in recent memory, while data is commonly referred to as "the new oil."

But mobile apps also collect highly personal data like contact lists, photos, texts, location, and calendar items. Many times apps access data like messages or contacts without permission. And although many developers are responsible, a 2012 Future of Privacy Forum report shows that nearly half of paid apps and a third of free apps do not have privacy policies.

Much like collecting any other asset, collecting consumer data should be responsible. Apps should provide consumers with notice and choice regarding how data is collected, shared, and used, while protecting the security of data.

SOLUTION: The APPS Act would require that app developers maintain privacy policies, obtain consent from consumers before collecting data, and securely maintain the data that they collect. The APPS Act seeks to cultivate trust between developers and consumers through responsibility.

Transparency, control, and security are the cornerstones of this trust. Through AppRights—Congressman Johnson's bottom-up mobile privacy initiative—we have heard from many consumers who want greater transparency, control, and security on their mobile devices. This process has involved listening to the developer community to strike a balance that promotes trust on mobile devices without impeding innovation or functionality. The result is the APPS Act, a balanced approach to mobile privacy.

Privacy is an issue that should unite us, not drive us apart.

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS: Consumer Action, Consumer Federation of America, Consumer Watchdog